



**EPILEPSY
NAMIBIA**

Helpline: 0813226834 info: www.epilepsynamibia.org

Epilepsy

Wellness + Self-Management

1. Medical Management
2. Chronic Care + Caregivers
3. Manage Seizures
4. Lifestyle Management



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Medical Management



Get to know your own epilepsy and treatment.

Have an active partnership with your health care team. Ask if you are not sure.

Take medicine the way the doctor tells you

- Same time, every day, always.
- Be involved in decisions and requirements for medicines, tests, surgery or devices.

Identify and treat other health problems early.

Take a list of questions to your medical appointment

Chronic Care + Caregivers



Live a healthy lifestyle

Coping with how epilepsy affects your daily life
and independence

Keep a Seizure diary

Take diary to next health visit

Caregivers can only provide quality care if they
also are healthy and rested.

Date	Time	How long was the seizure?
What happened before or after the seizure?		
Is the seizure different than before?		



Manage Seizures



when someone has a seizure:

Time the seizure anyway you can, watch, counting, singing song, from start to finish.

Clear hard or sharp objects away from the person.

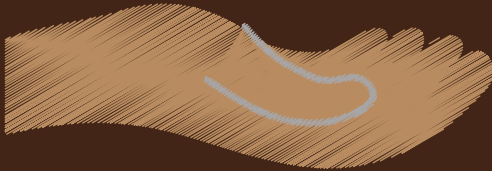
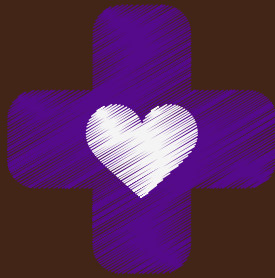
Don't put anything in their mouth.

Don't try to hold them down or stop the movements.

When the seizure stops, place them on their side to help keep their airway clear.

Only call emergency for injury or when seizure does not stop in 4 min.

If you have to move a person from danger, put a blanket underneath them and move the blanket



Safety for you



Tell people around you what to do when you have a seizure.

Keep somebody who can help you close at all times

Avoid situations that hold danger to you when you have a seizure

If you have to leave home alone, carry identification and emergency contact details

Lifestyle Management



Stress Management

Look for solutions to avoid stress:

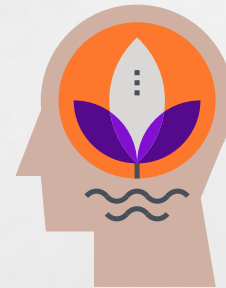
Self-management of stress is what people can do to take care of themselves everyday. When you feel worried, scared or stressed

- *calm yourself down* -

Find a quiet place, breathe deeply and slowly
Clear your mind of troublesome thoughts
Think about things that make you happy

- *when you feel better* -

- Can you plan or prepare better?
- Can you talk to somebody who can help?
- Can you change the situation that caused stress?
- Can you accept and cope with the stress?
- Can you teach yourself ways to deal with stress in the future?



Diet + Nutrition

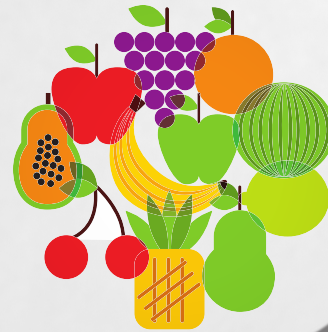
People with epilepsy can eat all natural and healthy local food. It is essential that we eat a balanced diet that includes all food groups everyday e.g. vegetables, some protein (beans have more protein than meat), little carbohydrates (bread, pasta, rice, mahangu) to stay healthy.

Sugar and caffeine cause seizures and have to be avoided.

You will find sugar in sweets, cakes, fast food, preserved sauces, cold drinks, juice, chips.
Caffeine in coffee, tea, energy drinks, colas.
Rooibos tea does not have caffeine.

If eating a meal before taking medication is not possible, a slice of bread or a small snack will do.

Food triggers for seizures are rare and more often have an emotional connection than the food having a direct effect. The Ketogenic diet works for seizure control but needs to be approved by medical professionals and dietitians.

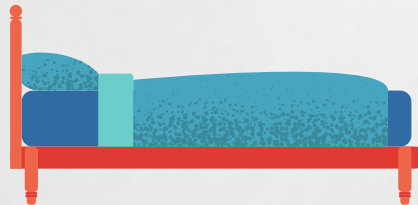


Sleep patterns + precaution

Good quality sleep is needed

6 to 8 hours a night for an adult and 8 to 10 hours for young children is enough to re-energize. Some types of medication will make you feel sleepy but oversleeping is not a good thing.

1. Make sure that you relax before going to bed. No screen time of any sort for 2 hours before you go to bed.
2. The sleeping area should be cool, dark enough and quiet.
3. If you do have seizures at night, sleep without a pillow or use a sponge with holes, through which you can breathe. No fluffy toys in bed.
4. For night time seizures it would be best to have somebody sleep in the same area or use a baby monitor or similar device to alert help.
5. Lack of sleep causes seizures and you should get help from the medical team for a little while to overcome the problem.



Physical Activity

Most people with epilepsy enjoy playing sport. Protective gear and a buddy, who knows how to deal with seizures, is needed. Even swimming is possible if you: learn how to swim, use flotation gear like “life jackets” and never swim alone.

~ Daily outdoor exercise is healthy for all ~



If you are not that into sport, take a walk, use a skipping rope or do exercises in the open air, even if you are in a wheelchair.

You can ask an Occupational Therapist to develop an activity program that works for you if you have physical challenges.

A daily work-out doing chores can be useful, sweeping, cleaning, gardening and general jobs around the house and garden all help to make the body move around and build strength

The most enjoyable exercise is to make music and dance to your hearts content.



Rest + Recreation

In order to lead a healthy and productive life, we need to balance all parts of our lives. Even though we have to work and make our contribution to society, we need some rest and recreation too.

We all need some time to recharge our batteries and stimulate our interests. To calm down and take a little time to rest after activities.

We can do this in many ways:

Some quiet time to order our thoughts
Relaxation techniques
Spend some time in nature
Sit in the shade and watch the world go by
Any shape of hobby

Collect something, anything from
leaves or stones too...
whatever interests you
Create something, art, design, hand
crafts, build puzzles, write or tell a
story, sing, read.
Comfort yourself with sound, smell or
tastes you enjoy.



Education + Employment

All people need a good job, want to earn their own money and help their communities. So do people with epilepsy. There are different schooling systems which can teach learners different abilities.

As technology is developing it is becoming easier to learn new skills. Many jobs do not need reading and writing as the most important skill any more but need new knowledge.

Education of all kinds is necessary for all and learners with epilepsy must be educated to their full potential. Seizures can be dealt with in all learning environments.

A job should be suitable and safe for the person.

Remember that there are many sectors in which to earn a living: formal, informal, self-employed, self-sustainable or in a creative combination of these.



Living environment

Living areas should be safe for a person with epilepsy

Furniture of wood or steel, loose carpets, sharp edges in bathrooms or kitchens and hard floor surfaces can cause injury during a seizure.

Open flames in cooking areas, open cooking fires or gas stoves must have flame guards around them.

Bathroom doors should never be locked and must open to the outside so as not to trap a person with a seizure inside.

Shower or wash in a shallow basin rather than bath.

See to it that emergency services have quick and easy access to the living environment.

Depending on seizure control some people with epilepsy can live independently but arrangements have to be made for safety, connectivity, mobility and access to and for emergency services.

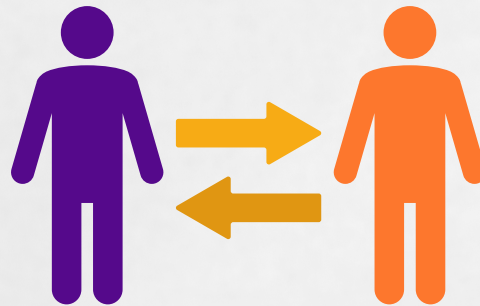


Social Relationships

The support and understanding of family and friends is important. Be honest and as open as possible with people around you. Make sure they have the correct facts about your condition. It is no disgrace to have epilepsy and it would be a tragedy to let it dominate your life. It is important that family and friends respect the independence of people with epilepsy and do not try to over-protect them. Try to ignore any negative reactions.

Thanks to better medical treatment and improved understanding of the condition, most people with epilepsy lead full and active lives.

Don't let the fear of having a seizure keep you at home. Remember that with the right approach, qualifications and skills, epilepsy need not be a major barrier to a happy social life.



Pregnancy

Pregnancy should be planned and discussed with your partner and doctor. Anti-epileptic medication must be taken to keep control of seizures but should not be a risk to baby.

Like for all pregnancies it is important to see your doctor regularly.

Your labour and the delivery of your baby is not likely to be different from that of other mothers.

It is unlikely that baby will be affected by the drugs in breast milk. Breastfeeding is a way of weaning baby off the medication absorbed during pregnancy.



Like all new parents you and your partner will find parenthood exciting and challenging. The pleasure you get from your baby should not be affected in any way by the fact that you have epilepsy.

**The biggest problem most people with epilepsy face is
other people's attitude to epilepsy**

**What people with epilepsy need most is acceptance and
understanding.**

Wellness Program partly
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